



„Northern Face / Face Nord” by Saint Loup

Editions Arthaud, Saint Armand, Cher, 1946, pp. 312

We found this extremely rare copy of the first edition today thanks to our comrade Georges Briche and his „National Book Club / C.L.N” in Croth (Normandy). This novel by Saint Loup (born Marc Augier 1908-1990) really amazed and saddened us at the same time. This time it is not about a group of soldiers but of young „youth hostels residents” during the war.

The head of this youth group is called Guido La Meslée and his fictitious name comes from the conjunction of two names that really existed: the German mountaineer Guido Lammer * (1863-1945) and the French aviator Edmond-Marin La Meslée (1912-1945). On the other hand, the hero of the novel Guido was born in 1915 (three years after the real La Meslée), as we can read on page 13. In our opinion Saint Loup wanted to perturbate us but we trust Francis Bergeron and his monograph on our favorite novelist („Saint-Loup , who am I ?”, Pardès editions, France, 2010, page 64).

A group of youth hostels residents decides to go north to discover the mythical Hyperborea of the heroes. We don't like revealing the end but we will do it exceptionally for this novel which is completely out of print, even the following editions to this first one. So you cannot find it in the market but only at the C.L.N mentioned at the beginning. We haven't looked but we're sure it's not available on the internet either. This novel written „in two weeks” (Bergeron, page 61) talks about the adventures of Guido La Meslée who „in love with an almost inaccessible ideal ... is confronted with the weakness of men He goes into exile in a remote valley but a group of faithful follow him in his retreat. We are a little in the context of a sect „(Bergeron, pp.64-65). So that's one more reason to call Saint Loup a „paganist”, like us.

„Jean Laval, Guido La Meslée and Francis Crétier thus die at the end of their initiation, going up to the top so as not to have to come down again: in order not to be condemned to return to it again, they cut themselves off from a community that they have, wrongly believed to be able to live towards what they thought were „heroic times.” Jean Laval kills himself at Olan to escape from the French citizens on their way to war against Nazi Germany, Guido La Meslée kills himself at Pic Gaspard to escape from the disappearance of his dream community, the defeat of the „new man” of National Socialism. Francis Crétier kills himself at Miahra Yama to escape from the pusillanimity and materialism of Western society in post-war France” (written by Emmanuel Nadal and copied from this link: <https://journals.openedition.org/babel/1316> – at the bottom).

But we should not, however, follow a pessimistic message for our cause. We must rather dream of the rise of Eric Zemmour and the „virile camaraderie / friendship” which is a term used by Emmanuel Nadal in his university thesis.

written by Dionysos ANDRONIS

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